

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

"It is the eternal, inescapable law that growth comes only from work and preparation, whether the growth be material, mental, or spiritual."—J. REUBEN CLARK, JR.

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THE PALESTINE-SYRIAN MISSION

HISTORICAL NOTES

ELDER RICHARD S. BENNETT

THE history of missionary work in Palestine and adjoining countries provides a parallel to the histories of many projects throughout the existence of the Church in this dispensation. Its early chapters are replete with devotion to ideals, with sacrifice for duty, with disappointment and suffering, and yet, with perseverance against seemingly insurmountable opposition, with faith in the successful outcome of labour in a cause that is right. Its final chapters are yet to be written, but they will undoubtedly carry in them an account of the ultimate success that was the vision of all who served unselfishly with means, time, and even life, to bring to pass its completion.

The work found its beginning well over ninety years ago when, on April 6th, 1840, Orson Hyde, a member of the Council of the Twelve, and of the tribe of Judah, received a call from the Prophet Joseph Smith to make his way to the Holy Land, and there to dedicate the land of Palestine for the gathering of the Jews. Elder Hyde, with Elder John E. Page, who was commissioned to accompany him, set out from Nauvoo on the 15th of April, to work their way to Jerusalem. Along the way from Nauvoo to New York, they preached to the Jews of the larger cities, hoping to instil into their hearts the spirit of gathering to the promised land. After several delays, the two of them finally reached New York where Elder Hyde, deserted by Elder Page, who had suddenly lost the spirit of his mission, embarked alone for Liverpool on February 13th, 1841.

Many difficulties and privations faced him before he finally reached Jerusalem late in October, 1841. But once there, he lost no time in performing the work he had been sent to do. Early on a Sunday morning, October 24th, 1841, he ascended the Mount of Olives and there, in the growing light of morning, offered an impassioned and inspired prayer, dedicating and consecrating the land to the return of the Jews from the four corners of the earth. He asked that it might be prepared for the rearing

of a temple in the name of the Lord, that it might once more be made fertile and productive, and predicted that it would be re-taken and governed by Christian peoples.

Some thirty years later, the Mount of Olives again became the scene of Latter-day Saint worship. There, on March 2nd, 1873, President George A. Smith and a party consisting of Elders Lorenzo Snow and Albert Carrington of the Council of the Twelve, Elders Feranorz Little, Paul A. Schettler and Thomas W. Jennings, and Sister Eliza R. Snow, all of whom had been travelling extensively throughout Europe and Asia Minor, held a short service, during which they re-dedicated and consecrated the land for the return of the Jews, and invoked the Lord in His own due time to restore the early fruitfulness of the soil.

Records of the Turkish Mission at hand are, unfortunately, somewhat incomplete. Undoubtedly many missionaries, not chronicled here, have figured greatly in its growth. No injustice is meant by their omission, for they shall share, with their fellow missionaries of whom information is available, our interest.

On December 15th, 1884, two Elders, George Naegle and Jacob Spori, labouring in European missions, received appointments to proceed to Constantinople for the purpose of introducing the Gospel into Turkey. They started out together, but Elder Naegle was forced, by lack of funds, to return to Germany. Elder Spori, however, continued on alone, and reached Constantinople late in December of 1884. He laboured among the people of Turkey and nearby countries with indifferent success, making a few converts among the German-speaking colonists in Palestine. In March, 1885, Elder Joseph M. Tanner, who had been labouring in the Swiss and German mission, arrived in Constantinople to assist Elder Spori in the proselyting work. A month later, Elder F. M. Lyman, Jr., joined them. He and Elder Tanner set out on an extensive survey of Egypt and the Holy Land, leaving Elder Spori to pursue the work in Constantinople. They returned to the Turkish capital in May of that year, where Elder Tanner resumed his work with Elder Spori, and Elder Lyman retraced his steps to Vienna. The two Elders made the most of their opportunities, preaching the Gospel to the German colonists in and around the Holy Land, and attempting to pave the way, by contacts with government officials, for the publication of Church literature and for the proselyting work to be done in the future.

The year 1888 marks the commencement of active missionary work among the native Turkish and Syrian peoples. In the fall of that year, Elder F. F. Hintze was sent to preside over the mission. He spent nearly two years acquainting himself with the difficult languages of the Empire, and, when he had mastered them, began his ministry. Through the towns and cities of Asia Minor he went, much as did Paul of old, bearing to all who would listen, the Gospel message. Here and there along the way, Turks and Armenians accepted his message and were baptised, but, as he was alone, progress was naturally slow. In the meantime, however, four more elders, W. H. Smart, Edgar Simmons, L. A. Kelsch and Frederick Stauffer reached Constantinople. They remained there for a short time, and then two of them, Smart and Simmons, were called to take charge of the Aintab branch in Syria. They, none of them, knew the language of the people, and that limitation, coupled with the failure of President Hintze

to obtain permission from the Turkish Government to publish any kind of reading material bearing the Gospel message, made the work of proselyting discouraging and slow.

During the fall of 1889, Elder Simmons died. Sickness and releases diminished the remainder of the forces until Elder Stauffer was left alone in the field to carry on the work. Determined to make the best of his responsibility, he placed a local Elder in charge of the Aintab Branch, the only branch in the mission, and set out for Constantinople to attempt once more, as President Hintze had done, to gain permission from the Turkish Government to print Church literature. Visiting saints along the



SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUP, PALESTINE-SYRIAN MISSION

way, he arrived in the Capital early in May and began the important task that lay before him. Of his efforts he has to say :

I arrived at Constantinople on the 19th of May, and began a work with the government, trying to get rights for publishing our doctrines in the empire. We should have soon succeeded had it not been for the usual malice of professed Christian sects, that caused them to stir up prejudice against us among the Turks, who were otherwise friendly and favourable. Fortunately, I met a lawyer who had formerly been favourable to the Gospel, and on making further investigation, he was convinced of its truth. He assisted me in the work, and finally, after having appealed to the Supreme Court, it decided that we should have the privilege of printing the matter mentioned in the appeal.

At this time, the heads of the Christian sects united in a scheme to prejudice the Turks to remove their decree in our behalf. They succeeded in causing us delay and in bringing our case before the Supreme Court again to ascertain whether there is any foundation for the accusation that our doctrine encourages heresy or treachery to the "powers that be." Knowing our loyalty to government, and that the Bible, Book of

Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants, which contain our rules of faith, do not teach disloyalty, we have no fear but that the decision of the court in this case will be in our favour. This will give us a right to publish or teach anything that does not interfere with Turkish politics. . . .

While Elder Stauffer was occupied with the printing controversy, the local Elders were carrying on alone in the work of preaching the Gospel. Through their efforts about twelve members were added to the rolls of the mission, making a total of twenty-five converts during the year.

On October 6th, 1891, Elders J. F. Schoenfeld and Albert Hermann, arrived in Constantinople, where they remained until the following spring, studying the language. Elder Stauffer, in the meantime, received his release.

The statistical reports for the next two years show very little progress. The Elders were new in the field and had difficulty in expressing themselves in the strange Turkish tongue, and they continued to meet opposition on every side. The saints, too, felt the unfriendliness that their acceptance of a despised creed brought upon them from their Christian neighbours. At Aintab, the children of the Latter-day Saints were debarred from attending Christian schools, thereby depriving them of their only means of education.

Next to arrive in the mission to labour were Elders William E. Martell and John A. Clark. They reached Liverpool in February of 1894, and then continued on east. On their way, they were joined at Leipzig by Elder E. W. Robinson, who had been called to continue his labours in Turkey, and the three of them proceeded to Beirut in Syria, where President Musser was labouring. Elder Clark's mission, however, was to be short-lived, for after he had been in the field just a few months, he contracted small-pox, and, after an illness of nine days, died.

The brief statistical reports of the mission for 1895 show a gradual, but very slow growth from 25 to 38 souls. In March of 1896, during the terrible outrages of the Turks against the Christians in the Holy land, the work was placed under the direction of a local elder, Dr. A. D. I. Hagopian, and the missionaries were withdrawn from the land.

When the trouble subsided, Elder Andrew L. Larson and Philip F. Maycock, who had been labouring in the Swiss and German Mission, were assigned to transfer their attentions to Turkey. The saints had established themselves at Aleppo, Aintab, and Zara, and were anxiously awaiting the return of missionaries to teach and help them. That the work progressed after the Elders once more resumed activities is shown by the statistical report of that year, 1897, which lists the membership of the mission at 66.

In the spring of 1899, Elder Anthon H. Lund of the Council of Twelve, and Elder F. F. Hintze, who had already served one mission in Turkey, were sent from Utah to aid the saints to solve the problems that faced them. As the Turkish government virtually forbade emigration, the authorities hoped to establish a colony in the Empire as a gathering place for the scattered saints. After a tour of Palestine and Syria, a site a few miles from Haifa in the Kishon Valley was tentatively selected. The movement, however, was postponed indefinitely because the combined factors of the financial condition of the Church, the unfriendli-

ness of the Ottoman government, and the spiritual condition of the saints made it seem impractical at that time.

Later in the year, Elder F. F. Hintze succeeded Elder Philip S. Maycock to serve his second term as president of the Turkish Mission. Toward the end of his administration, President Francis M. Lyman, accompanied by Elders Sylvester Q. Cannon and Albert Hermann, journeyed to Palestine from Utah, and for a third time the land was consecrated for the work of the Lord in the last days. When President Lyman returned home, he took Elder Hintze with him, and left Elder Albert Hermann to preside over the mission, his second term. At the release of Elder Hermann early in 1904, Elder J. W. Booth of Alpine, Utah, who was later joined in the mission field by his wife, Sister Mary R. Booth, undertook the responsibility of the direction of the Turkish Mission. Elder Booth had already filled one mission in these lands. At the beginning of his administration, the mission population numbered about 200 souls. The following letter, written by Elder Booth to the *Millennial Star* in 1904, gives a splendid picture of the conditions that he found among the saints:

. . . One of the great difficulties of this mission is the extreme poverty of the saints. Each year their chances seem to lessen of providing sustenance for their families. Many of them are weavers of silk, cotton or wool, and the manufactured goods of Europe are coming in, doing away with the products of the little hand looms of the Orient, and the poor weavers are, year by year, hopelessly struggling to prolong the life of their dying industry. At present, however, several of our sisters are engaged in making rugs, which are being sent to Z. C. M. I. and to Liverpool for sale. Fancy needlework is also coming into favour among them, and samples have been forwarded for inspection and advertisement. The workers earn from twopence to sixpence per day, and men's wages of the weaving class seldom exceed a shilling for ten hours' hard work.

With such a limited income, the tithing is far below the needs of the branches, and the poor are almost daily begging assistance to keep their children from hunger. This pitiable state attracts the attention of the sympathetic elder, and our prayers are joined with theirs for the establishment of something more hopeful and permanent, hence the recent appeal to the authorities from the mission for a colony.

The methods of preaching the Gospel in this land are necessarily different from those of other fields. Three languages prevail among the people—Arabic, Turkish and Armenian. Each tongue is spoken among our saints, and there are also the German-speaking saints of Haifa, who know the Gospel only in their own tongue. Until 1899, we had no books but the Bible, and almost no tracts to assist in the work of spreading the Gospel. During that year a few thousand tracts were published in the Turkish language and sent throughout northern Syria and Asia Minor, and they have been read by many people. To assist in the work of the branches, a selection of twenty-eight sections of the Doctrine and Covenants was made and translated by President Hintze. Copies were made and put into book form, and they have done much good in teaching the saints the order and regulations of the Church. So far, our hymn books are only handmade, and we now feel the need of a suitable book with music set to our original hymns and to those translated into the language. The Book of Mormon has been translated into the Turkish language, and we are anxiously awaiting its publication.

Our work till now has mostly been among the Armenians, a people in whose veins runs the blood of Israel. Their ancestors were most likely in the line of the northward march of the ten tribes, and very probably associated and mingled with them. Their characteristics point strongly to an infusion of the blood of Reuben, for they are, as was that prince of

Israel, "unstable as water." They are apt and industrious, yet lack in capacity for leadership, sharp but shallow, shrewd but not sturdy.

The door to the great Mohammedan race is slightly ajar, and many of them have heard the Gospel. Some of our warmest friends are among those of Islam, and a few are holding high positions in the government. A great many of these people know French, and the Book of Mormon in that language is working its way among them.

President and Sister Booth remained in the Turkish Mission working among the saints until October in 1909, when, finally, the continued opposition of the Turks against the Christians, and the occasional outrages that took great toll of Christian lives, made it necessary, for the sake of their personal safety, that they withdraw from the country. For the next twelve or thirteen years, the mission was left entirely under the direction of local saints. The hatred of the Turks for anything Christian made it impossible for them to pursue proselyting activities. They did well to stay together as best they could, encouraging one another to remain faithful to the cause.

After the Great War, when the oppressive Ottoman power was broken, for a while, at least, and Palestine and Syria were placed under British and French mandates, the Church began to plan for the re-opening of the work in the Holy Land. In the summer of 1921, Elders David O. McKay and Hugh J. Cannon made a survey of the district. The name of the mission was changed from the Turkish to the Armenian Mission, as the remaining members were Armenians. The Turks who had embraced the Gospel had either emigrated or apostatized. Elder J. W. Booth was again selected, because of his deep understanding of the people, and his knowledge of conditions in the near east, to direct the Mission.

He arrived at Aintab, in Syria, on November 8th, 1921, the same day that the French Government gave notice of their intention to withdraw from Aintab the protection they had maintained there since the close of the war. The Turks encouraged, made the threat that, four hours after the evacuation of the French forces, not an Armenian in Aintab would be left alive. To the Armenians in the city, whose numbers had been reduced from 25,000 to 5,000 during the frightful massacres of the recent years, this threat carried fear and dreadful forebodings. Little wonder it is, then, that the remnant of the Aintab branch of the Church looked upon Elder Booth as a heaven-sent deliverer. Elder David O. McKay has recorded in an editorial of the *Millennial Star* of February 28th, 1924, the experiences of President Booth in meeting the emergencies that faced him :

. . . That evening it was decided that the members of the Church and their associates would leave Aintab at the first opportunity. They would have started that night, if possible.

Upon his return to Aleppo, Elder Booth took up his abode among the refugees there and began to make preparations for the exodus from Aintab, ninety miles distant.

What difficulties he encountered in accomplishing this duty, perhaps no one can realize. There were carts and horses, and other transportation facilities to secure. There was permission of a not too favourable government to obtain. There were winter rains and cold weather to endure, and muddy roads to traverse.

How he was impressed to seek the aid of General De La Mathe of the French army, who issued an order for passports for fifty-three "Mor-

mons" to come out of Aintab; how Lieutenant A. P. Guitton convoyed President Booth from Aleppo to Aintab, furnishing food, bedding and protection free of charge; how the little colony packed household furniture and personal belongings on the mule-drawn vehicles that made up the train that started from Aintab to Aleppo on a wet December day; how much of the poor but treasured household articles were abandoned by the roadside to lighten the mud-bedraggled wagons; how the saints endured the exposure in comparative cheerfulness because they were going to safety; the difficulties of housing them after their arrival in Aleppo; all these experiences, though unpleasant and full of anxiety, are now cherished memories in the man's mind who alone carried the worry and responsibility of it all. They constitute also a bit of Church history that merits proper recognition. . . .



M. I. A. PAGEANT GROUP—PALESTINE-SYRIAN MISSION

For over a year after the re-opening of the mission, Elder Booth laboured alone among the saints. In April of 1923, Elder Earl B. Snell, who had spent fourteen months in the Swiss and German mission, joined him. The two of them worked incessantly to provide commodious headquarters for the colony that had been established at Aleppo, and to strengthen the organization of the Aleppo Branch. After a stay of eight months, Elder Snell was obliged to return to his home, leaving President Booth once more alone.

A month or two later, Sister Mary R. Booth left Utah to again take up missionary labours with her husband. President and Sister David O. McKay, who were at that time presiding over the European Missions, accompanied her from Liverpool to Syria. They arrived at Beirut on January 18th, 1924, and immediately set out for Aleppo. There, among the saints, they held the first

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 1933

EDITORIAL

THE RETURN OF THE JEWS

THE Latter-day Saints have ever believed that the prophecies of old will be fulfilled, and that the Jews will in time return and possess their ancient home, the Promised Land.

To-day, these prophecies seem in process of fulfillment. As elsewhere recorded in this issue of the *Star*, the Jews are making the waste places of Palestine glad with plenty. They are transforming the country by an application of industry and skill never excelled.

This is of great interest as a sign of the times in which we live. If the Jews of the world will cling to their ancient faith, the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they will succeed in their enterprise of making the land promised to Abraham and his seed, their very homeland.

The faith of the patriarchs looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. He has come! The Jews must acknowledge His coming, His death and resurrection, His redeeming mercy, before their venture in Palestine will be wholly accomplished. They must accept the Gospel.

With these thoughts in mind, the restored Church of Christ looks with deep interest, prayerfully, humbly, upon the re-opening of the Palestine-Syrian Mission.

Near to us we seem to hear the voice of Amos :

And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God.

COULD YOU DO AS WELL?

THE members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Armenian Mission (now the Palestine-Syrian Mission) were left without President and missionaries from December 1928, to June 1933—a period of four and one-half years.

These brethren and sisters had the Bible in their native tongues, the Book of Mormon in Turkish, which many could read, and a few tracts in Turkish and Armenian. The available Gospel literature was extremely limited.

In living the Gospel and in carrying on the work of the branches, the membership of the Armenian Mission had to rely chiefly on their memory of that which had been taught them, and upon the guidance of the Spirit of God. This was done in face of opposition and solicitation of the ministry of other Christian denominations, who declared "Mormonism" to be untrue,

Despite these serious handicaps and difficulties, the Armenian saints were found in June, 1933, to be true to the faith, although hungry for Gospel knowledge, but in need of mission leadership. During this long period without missionary help the branches had held together exceptionally well; regular meetings had been conducted, with fair attendance; and the members bore fervent testimony to the truth of the restored Gospel of Christ.

This is all the more remarkable because during several decades the exigencies of missionary help has been such as to deprive these good people of systematic practice in the organizations of the Church. Theoretical knowledge of the Gospel is not convincing to the soul; it is the practice that counts.

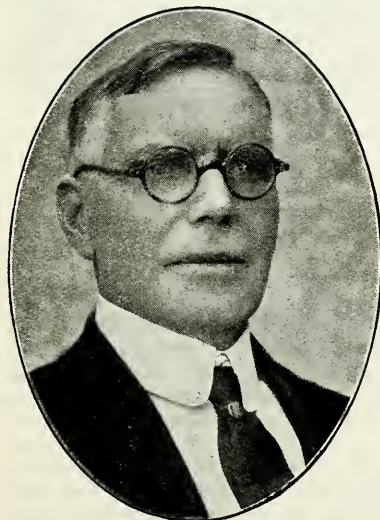
Could the branches in missions under constant leadership do better, or as well? That is a question each one may well ask himself. Left without missionaries, would we who have had long teaching in the Gospel, with well-organized Priesthood and auxiliary groups, with a bounty of printed Gospel matter—would we do as well as our Armenian brethren and sisters have done? We could scarcely do better.

After all, the test of spiritual strength comes when we have to stand alone. It is always easy to move with the crowd. But the Gospel is for individual men, to help them grow, until, wherever they may be, they can and will "carry on" in the labours of the Church.

We are grateful that our Armenian brethren and sisters have at last received strong, intelligent, loving leaders. May they all receive the reward of their faithfulness, and continue true to the end.—W.

EXERCISES AT THE GRAVE OF PRESIDENT BOOTH

THE Armenian cemetery in Aleppo lies on a side hill. Brother Booth's grave is at the upper highest end of the cemetery. From his grave one may look over the valley below and a good part of the city of Aleppo. It is very prominently situated. The scarcity of water in Aleppo leaves the cemeteries very barren. There is no grass growing on them and a very few flowers, except in one of the oldest cemeteries lying within the city itself not far from the business center.



JOSEPH. W. BOOTH.

A thick cement slab has been placed over Brother Booth's grave, which makes it look very tidy, and is a protection against the ever-moving sands. The monument which has been erected over the grave is the outstanding monument in the cemetery, and since the grave is at

the very upper edge of the cemetery, it is visible from all parts of the cemetery itself and from the highway below. All were pleased with the setting of the grave and with the effect of the monument.

On Sunday, June 18th, 1933, two meetings were held with the Aleppo saints, one in the early forenoon and another in the early afternoon. At the close of the afternoon meeting the members and friends present walked to the cemetery and gathered around the grave of Brother Booth. There a brief outdoor meeting was held.

The exercises began with the singing of "Come Listen to a Prophet's Voice," one of President Booth's favourite hymns. Branch President Bezzian opened the meeting with prayer. Sister Widtsoe, in behalf of Sister Booth, made a brief address and placed on the grave some pressed flowers from Brother Booth's garden in Alpine, sent by Sister Booth. The members and friends present had all brought one or two flowers—and flowers are very scarce in Aleppo—and placed these flowers on the grave until it was well covered. A brief address was then made by Brother Widtsoe, and the grave and the monument dedicated. The services closed with those present singing, "We Thank Thee, O God, For a Prophet," and a closing prayer by Brother Piranian.

The exercises ended just as the sun set behind the western hills. A few clouds floated in the blue sky and made great splashes of colour as the sun set. It was a peaceful, happy hour. One of the touching incidents among many was when an aged woman, a member of the Church, quietly approached the grave after the meeting and abstracted the flowers that Sister Booth had sent, and placed them carefully under the original headstone on Brother Booth's grave provided by the local saints, which has been placed permanently just back of the monument. The circle of members watching her do this with their approval said, "And there they shall remain undisturbed."

President Booth is greatly beloved by the Armenian Saints. His picture is on the walls of the rooms, and his memory is cherished in their hearts. Undoubtedly he did much for them. He was not only a leader among them, but was a wise counselor with the spirit of a loving father. We are happy to know that his last resting place is in the land and among the people he loved so well.

REORGANIZATION OF PALESTINE-SYRIAN MISSION

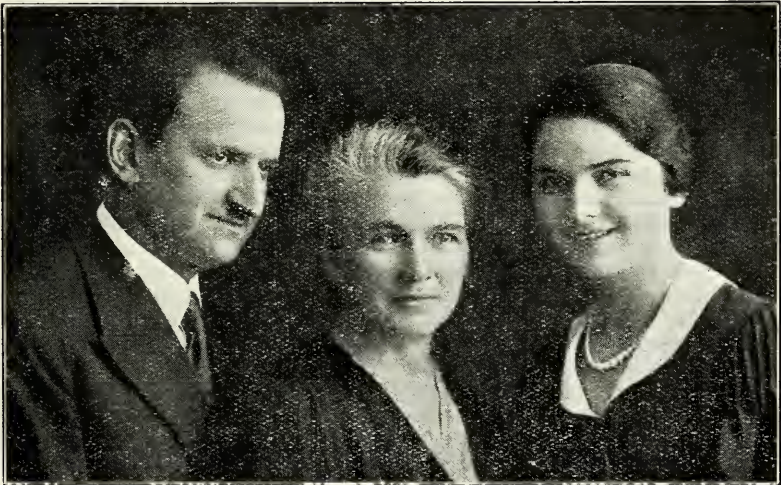
SINCE the death of President J. W. Booth in December, 1928, the Armenian Mission—now the Palestine-Syrian Mission—has been without a president. Under instructions from the First Presidency, the President of the European Missions, Elder John A. Widtsoe, accompanied by his wife, made a visit during May and June to the mission, met with the saints there, installed a new president, and did such other work as came up in the course of the visit.

Elder Badwagan Piranian, who has been appointed President of the Palestine-Syrian Mission, is an Armenian by birth, but has lived most of his life in continental Europe, Russia, England and Switzerland, and is a Swiss citizen. He and his wife, Bertha

Piranian, and their daughter, Astehig, arrived on April 22nd, in Haifa, the headquarters of the mission, and are now well established in the new mission headquarters at 25 Garden Street, Haifa, Palestine.

Brother and Sister Widtsoe reached Haifa on May 17th, and remained in Palestine and Syria until towards the end of June. During their visit they had the opportunity of meeting a number of prominent people representing the various races and activities of Palestine and of Syria. They were everywhere received very kindly. There appeared to be no prejudice among the people against the Latter-day Saints.

On May 21st, the first meeting under the new administration was held in the mission home at Haifa. The small meeting room was crowded to overflowing with Armenians and Arabians who had gathered to hear the message of the newcomers. The following Tuesday, May 23rd, eight persons who had been investigating



PRESIDENT AND SISTER BADWAGAN PIRANIAN AND DAUGHTER

the Gospel by correspondence for nearly two years were baptized in the Mediterranean Sea at the point where Mount Carmel dips into the sea.

Later, two meetings were held with each of the three organized branches in Syria: In Damascus on June 11th, in Beirut on June 14th, and in Aleppo on June 18th. Opportunities were also given the saints on other days to meet the visitors and to talk over existing conditions. President and Sister Widtsoe, President and Sister Piranian and their daughter, constituted the party visiting the branches on this mission visit. All of the meetings were well attended. The meeting rooms were crowded and many friends of the Latter-day cause were present. The few members of the Church in Palestine, in Jerusalem and Haifa, were also met and their problems discussed with them.

On the afternoon of May 31st, Elders Widtsoe and Piranian, and

Sister Widdsoe, gathered in an olive grove high up on the slope of the Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem, and there offered an earnest prayer that the Lord would be mindful of the words of dedication formerly spoken there, and bless and prosper the work now about to be undertaken in behalf of the restored Gospel.

The saints in the Palestine-Syrian Mission are faithful, devoted people who have carried on the work of the Church remarkably well during the four years and a half that they have been without mission president or missionaries. The three branches in Syria have been under local presidents, who have attempted to the best of their ability to carry out the instructions that they have received from time to time from the European Mission Office. They are now full of rejoicing to know that someone has been appointed to preside over the mission, and they live in hopes that missionary work may be soon under way in the fruitful field of the Near East. The many faithful Latter-day Saint missionaries who have laboured in Turkey, Syria and Palestine during the last fifty years have done an excellent work. The fruits of their labours are evident. The saints of the Palestine-Syrian Mission sing Latter-day Saint hymns with gusto, sometimes in Turkish or Armenian, and often in English. They are hungry for further instruction in the principles of the Gospel.

During the years the Gospel has been preached in these lands, four missionaries have died while in service. Two Elders, John A. Clark and Adolf Haag, lie buried in Haifa, Brother Emil Huber in Aleppo, and Brother Edgar Simmons in Aintab, Turkey. The graves of the brethren in Haifa and Aleppo were visited and found to be kept in almost perfect condition.

It is in Aleppo also that the late President Joseph W. Booth lies buried. The Church has recently provided a suitable headstone to be placed over his grave. The grave lies high up on the sloping hill on which the cemetery has been placed, and the headstone stands out prominently as viewed from the lower valley. After the afternoon meeting with the saints in Aleppo, all present walked to the cemetery and gathered around President Booth's grave, where a brief service was held and the grave and the monument dedicated by Elder John A. Widdsoe. It was a very beautiful and touching occasion.

Syria since the war has been under French mandate, and Palestine under British mandate. As a consequence of the enlightened administration of these countries, Palestine and Syria have been greatly improved. The roads have been extended and are in excellent condition—quite as good as any in the United States. Harbour improvements are going forward rapidly in Beirut and Haifa and elsewhere as needed. The natural resources have been developed, such as the asphalt beds in Northern Palestine and the chemicals found in the brine of the Dead Sea. Education is being fostered, and sanitary measures taken for the protection of the people against disease. Both Palestine and Syria are beautiful countries, containing many natural resources, with an ideal climate, unless one objects to the hot spell in the summer. There is no unemployment in either of the two countries; everyone is busy and there is reasonable prosperity on every hand.

The situation in Palestine is particularly interesting because of the attempts of the Jews to make of Palestine a true Jewish national home. Some of the experiments in the reclamation of

Palestine are of world-wide interest, and clearly in fulfillment of the prophecies of old.

The Arabs, Armenians and Jews who live in Syria and Palestine are generally of the sober, thoughtful class. Religion is taken seriously by them. Missionary work in these lands would no doubt be welcomed by many who are seeking for the truth.

These countries are particularly interesting to Christians, for it was in them that the Lord worked out His purposes with the chosen people; there the Saviour performed His labours, and in them His followers preached the Gospel and laid the foundation of the world-wide spread of Christianity. The Palestine-Syrian Mission will no doubt be a most interesting and profitable field in which to teach the truth of the restored Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PALESTINE-SYRIAN MISSION

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conference of the Armenian Mission, a conference marked by the active participation of the saints. The McKay's visit was but a short one, however, and after a brief tour of the Holy Land, they returned to Liverpool.

The next two years were spent mostly in strengthening, internally, the organization of the Church in Syria. Dr. F. S. Harris, with President Booth, made a survey of the mission and its needs. As a result, great attention was paid to the development of the auxiliary organizations, and the education of the saints. In October of 1927, when President James E. Talmage of the European Mission visited the saints, he found them happy in the work, and progressing in their efforts to learn the Gospel. Encouraged by the condition of the saints, and by the progress that had been made in recent years, Brother Talmage, with the thought in view of extending the scope of the missionary work to include more of the cities of Palestine, selected Haifa as the future center of missionary activities, and as the mission headquarters. He and Elder Booth, after the selection, ascended Mount Carmel and there in a secluded spot, held a prayer service. Elder Talmage, praying, dedicated the city of Haifa as a missionary center, and confirmed the dedicatory prayers of the apostles of the Lord who, before him, had invoked the blessings of the Lord upon the land.

President and Sister Booth continued their unselfish work among the Armenian saints, sometimes with the aid of other missionaries, sometimes alone. To comply with the suggestion of President James E. Talmage, they moved the Mission headquarters from Aleppo to Haifa, and were in the midst of organizing the work of presenting the Gospel to the people of Haifa, when Elder Booth, weakened by his unceasing efforts to care for the small flock under his direction, succumbed to an attack of angina pectoris. He died on the 5th of December, 1928, and was buried at Aleppo in Syria. Elder Ralph V. Chisholm, then secretary of the European Mission office, was promptly sent to the Mission to close up its affairs in preparation for another president, and also to accompany the bereaved Sister Booth to her Utah home.

At President Booth's death, the Armenian Mission was once more left without a missionary leader. For four and one-half years the saints, as they had done on previous occasions, did their best, under local officers, to stay together and to live by the principles of truth that they had been taught. Occasional letters from the European Mission headquarters were their only source of outside inspiration and encouragement. Yet, when President and Sister John A. Widtsoe met with them on their recent trip to the Holy Land, they found most of them still staunch in the faith.

In the reorganization of the mission that was effected during President Widtsoe's visit, Elder Badwagan Piranian, an Armenian by birth, was appointed to be its presiding officer. The name of the mission was changed to the Palestine-Syrian Mission, and headquarters were re-established at Haifa, Palestine.

The problem that faces the saints in the near east to-day is largely an economic one. Their struggle will be to raise their standards of living, and to become independently self-supporting. To help them in this, President Piranian is admirably fitted by his knowledge of conditions in the near east and in Europe, and by his business ability. Facing the mission is the task of continuing the work among the native peoples, and of presenting the Gospel truths to the Jews who are returning in large numbers to their home of old. The prejudice against the Church among the peoples of the Holy Lands has almost vanished. The prospects for its future growth there are encouraging. And so it is very probable that, under President Piranian, the first of the final chapters of the story of missionary work in the near east will be written—the chapters that will begin to record its ultimate and crowning success. We pray it may be so.

THE NEW PALESTINE

ELDER FRANKLIN S. HARRIS, JR.

PALESTINE is a small country about the size of Wales, about 150 miles long, and between 30 and 40 wide, and for the most part hilly except for a coastal plain along the Mediterranean. Situated at the cross-roads between Europe, Africa and Asia, it has had an interesting history, but it is of especial interest to Latter-day Saints because the Lord promised the land to Abraham. Palestine is an old, old country, occupied long before Abraham's time. When the Israelites came back from Egypt, the land was filled with people.

The Israelites have had to fight continually for possession of this land. Since the people were deported by conquering nations they have striven to repossess it, a land for 2000 years under the Arabs.

Just a few years ago the spirit of gathering came upon the people of Israel, and for thirty-five years the Jews have waged a war for possession of the Holy Land. This has been greatly facilitated by the recent mandate of Great Britain and the Balfour declaration: "His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish

people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object."

Palestine's geographical position naturally fits her to become an important industrial and commercial centre of the Middle East. The Haifa Harbour, which is under construction, the Suez Canal to the south, her network of modern roads, her newly-developed hydro-electric power, and transportation facilities, are all aids in her economic development.

To-day Palestine is growing rapidly in population, industry and agriculture, due to the Jewish activities there. Industry in the accepted sense hardly existed before the commencement of modern Jewish settlement. Only within the last decade, with the influx of large-scale Jewish immigration (the Jews are now 17 per cent. of the population), has rapid industrial advance resulted, and a wide range of articles has begun to be manufactured locally. Industry is mainly established at Tel Aviv (the only Jewish city in the world to-day) and Haifa. It is important to note that industrial progress has not proceeded at the cost of harsh exploitation of cheap labour, as in other colonial countries. Palestine, in the face of an unprecedented crisis, maintained an unusual economic stability.

Agricultural settlement forms the essential basis of all Jewish life in Palestine. 26.6 per cent. of the Jewish population is in the agricultural settlements. Towards its development are directed the co-ordinated efforts of the various Jewish agencies. The Jews to-day are buying the land on the fertile plains and using modern implements in its cultivation. On the part of the plain extending inward from Haifa they have drained and made the country habitable.

In reclaiming the land the Jews have forsaken the capitalistic system. The Jewish National Fund buys the land, which remains a perpetual national possession. The families get it as a lease for fifty years. The settlements are based upon co-operation. All the Jew needs may be done through the co-operative plan, this in buying and selling. They also have a great banking system.

Palestine in ancient times was an agricultural country. To-day its ancient fertility is being restored. Although a small country, it produces a good variety of agricultural products, cereals, fruits, vegetables, dairy and poultry products, made possible for the most part by intensive and scientific methods.

There are several types of settlement in Palestine. There is one where the farmer buys the land himself, with perhaps aid from one of the financial institutions. There is another which is a smallholders' settlement on the land of the Jewish National Fund, allotted in equal holdings to each family on hereditary lease. Although each family runs its own farm independently, there is a co-operative buying and selling agency, mutual help is systematized, and mutual responsibility is organized to a high degree. The village affairs are administered by a committee, which is the representative of all holders. No wage labour is permitted.

Of greatest interest to the Latter-day Saints is the commune, because of its similarity to the United Order. The commune works on land of the Jewish National Fund on hereditary lease, in common. Every member has equal rights, "each giving according to his capacity, and receiving according to his needs." All income and expenses are pooled.

The growth of Jewish settlements and Jewish industry has gone hand in hand with that of agriculture. The budget for public works has provided means for the building of roads in new districts, and proved a boon during the unemployment crisis.

In addition to the buying of land and the aiding of settlements, the Jewish National Fund has also installed water supplies, engaged in afforestation, planting some 1,400,000 trees, and 20,000 acres of land have been drained. The Jewish National Fund has also acquired urban sites for public buildings, such as the Hebrew University and other colleges, synagogues, etc. City workers are provided with small plots near the large towns.

Education has been one of the great activities of the Jewish work in Palestine. About 250 institutions are maintained by or affiliated with the Department of Education. All grades of schools are included, kindergarten, elementary, secondary and Teachers' Training Schools. Two-thirds of the Jewish children attend school. The Hebrew University and the Jewish National and University Library (250,000 volumes), crown the Hebrew educational system.

The women, too, have been doing their part in the building up of Palestine. The Jewish women are active in (1) Training the women in all branches of agriculture; (2) Instructing in economic and hygienic household management and in rational feeding, and (3) Instructing mothers in modern infant hygiene and maintaining children's welfare centres. The women's Hadassah Medical Organization is active in such institutions as hospitals, polyclinics, laboratories, pre-natal and infant welfare.

To Latter-day Saints this building up of Palestine comes as the fulfillment of prophecy.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Transfers: Elder Gaskell A. Romney was transferred from the Sheffield to the London District, Elder Frank R. Bennett from the London District to the European Mission Office, on July 24th.

Releases and Departures: Elder Elmo H. Ellsworth of the Norwich and Birmingham Districts, and of the European Mission Office, was honourably released from his missionary labours on July 25th. He returned to his home in America aboard the s.s. *President Harding*, which sailed July 27th.

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